



# volunteer centre

Ionad d'Obair Dheonach Cheatharlach

CARLOW

Carlow Volunteer Centre  
Annual Report  
2016

## FOREWORD

The year 2016 was one of celebration for Carlow Volunteer Centre as we were 10 years old. The celebration of our 10<sup>th</sup> Birthday was a thread running through all our events last year and culminated in our joint celebrations with IT Carlow's Volunteer Fair. We were also joined by celebrity Miriam O'Callaghan for the occasion.

Celebrating 10 years was even more significant for Carlow Volunteer Centre when one reflects on the challenges the centre has faced in 10 years. We have experienced significant funding cuts and as a result Carlow Volunteer Centre lost their dedicated offices on Dublin Street. However, with the support of the Board, Staff and other agencies we have overcome these challenges including being housed by Carlow County Council. Although Carlow Volunteer Centre is not yet thriving, we are certainly maximising all of our resources to have the greatest impact for volunteers and volunteering involving organisations.

Last year presented its own set of challenges and opportunities for Carlow Volunteer Centre. We were reduced to one staff member last year, Natasha Akerele stepped up to Acting Manager and she along with Adam Lacey our Jobsbridge Intern gave a sterling effort to maintain the operations of Carlow Volunteer Centre to Volunteers and Volunteer Involving Organisations.

Last year was also a year of firsts for Carlow Volunteer Centre. We along with the broader Volunteer Network became local information hubs for the Charities Regulator in Carlow and offered support to charities seeking to complete their registration with the Charities Regulator.

Carlow Volunteer Centre developed and rolled out the very first Make A Difference programme to engage Transition Year students and deepen their knowledge and understanding of volunteering, as well as facilitate access to volunteering opportunities of interest to them.

Carlow Volunteer Centre also commenced their Volunteer Spotlight in the Carlow Nationalist which shines a light on volunteering in Carlow with a focus on volunteers and volunteer involving organisations.

I wish to thank the Board of Directors and other stakeholders including the Dept. of Housing, Planning, Community & Local Government, Carlow County Council and Unum who provided generous sponsorship of our marquee events.

I wish to thank the staff, interns and volunteers of Carlow Volunteer Centre for their commitment and professionalism in their work.

Last but not least I wish to thank the volunteers who continue to give so generously of that most precious resource time.

**CHAIRPERSON**

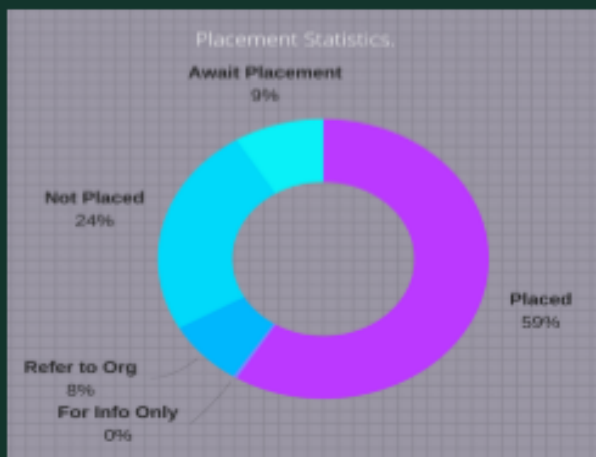


Margaret Moore

# VOLUNTEER STATISTICS FOR 2016

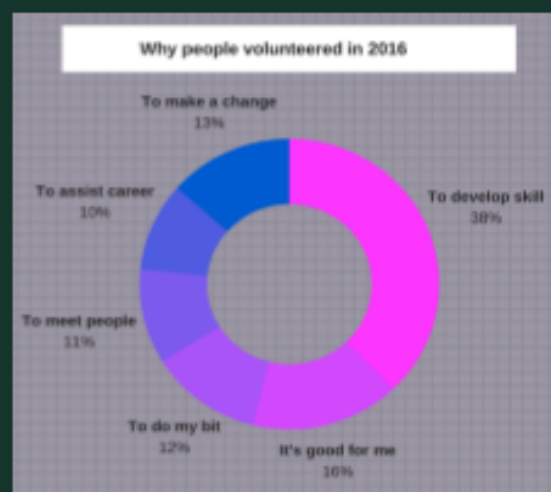
## Impact of Carlow Volunteer Centre

Carlow Volunteer Centre, is an independent, Carlow based organisation forming part of a network of 21 Volunteer Centres and 7 Volunteer Information Services from all across the country and are affiliated to Volunteer Ireland. We offer a range of services to volunteers and organisations alike, including a free Volunteer Placement Service, Volunteer Management Training, Support & Garda Vetting.



In 2016 we met with  
265 new Carlow vol-  
unteers.

The number 1 reason  
why people volun-  
teered in 2016 was to  
develop their skills.



# RECRUITMENT STATISTICS 2016

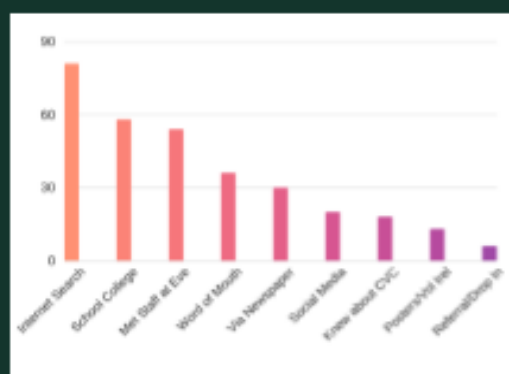
## Recruitment Method

### New Organisations

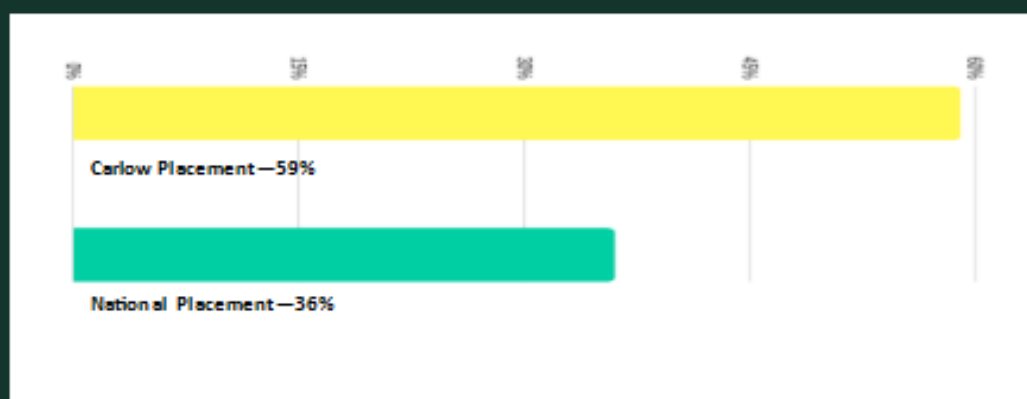


Carlow Volunteer Centre registered 20 new organisations in 2016 compared with 25 in 2015 and 12 in 2014.

### Means of Recruitment



The recruitment method shows that Internet Searches and Schools/Colleges continue to be the most popular recruitment methods in 2016 as they were in 2015.



Carlow Volunteer Centre believes in directly meeting and engaging with all people interested in volunteering. We believe our one to one personal service is responsible for Carlow Volunteer Centres high placement rate of volunteers.

# STAFF & VOLUNTEERS 2016

## MANAGER



Regina Duane

## PLACEMENT OFFICER



Aisling O' Rourke

## ACTING MANAGER/ PLACEMENT OFFICER



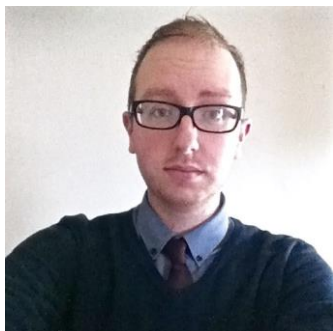
Natasha Akerele

## PLACEMENT OFFICER MATERNITY LEAVE



Brianna Connaughton

## Social Media Intern



Adam Lacey

## Volunteer

Liam Foley

Robin McMahon

## Volunteer



Rosario

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2016

MARGARET MOORE - Carlow County Council - Chairperson  
FRANK COMERFORD- Volunteer & Company Secretary  
COLETTE LANE - Unum  
MARTIN MEAGHAR- IT Carlow  
FIONA DUNNE - Carlow & Kilkenny ETB  
KARL DUFFY- Co. Carlow Development Partnership  
MARTHA JANE DUGGAN - Carlow Sports Partnership  
MICHELL O'Hara- Carlow Citizens Information

## COMPANY DETAILS

REGISTERED ADDRESS: Carlow Volunteer Centre Ltd.  
c/o Carlow County Council  
Athy Rd.  
Carlow

PHONE: 0599173033  
EMAIL: [info@volunteercarlow.ie](mailto:info@volunteercarlow.ie)

WEBSITE: [www.volunteercarlow.ie](http://www.volunteercarlow.ie)  
FACEBOOK: Carlow Volunteer Centre  
TWITTER: @VolunteerCarlow

LEGAL STATUS: Carlow Volunteer Centre is a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital.

COMPANY REGISTRATION No: 426131  
CHARITY No: CHY 17313  
CHARITY REGISTRATION No: 20064167

## STRENGTHS

Carlow Volunteer Centre greatest strengths are the flexibility and commitment of staff.

Carlow Volunteer Centre although not in a public office is in a position to meet with the vast majority of our volunteers.

We believe our ability to meet with volunteers has helped us achieve our high placement rate of 59% compared to the national average of 36%.

Carlow Volunteer Centres core strength is also the work that we have done and continue to do with Transition Year students. We believe that young people are the future of volunteering and should be facilitated to access volunteer opportunities suitable to them.

## CHALLENGES

One of the challenges that Carlow Volunteer Centre faces is our capacity to build sustainable relationships with Volunteer Involving Organisations outside of Carlow town. CVC aims to overcome this by participation in the Carlow Community Service Roadshow to actively promote Carlow Volunteer Centre.

Funding and appropriate resources continue to be one of the biggest challenges faced by Carlow Volunteer Centre. Funding for the promotion of our services and events is also a key challenge as promotion is key to the success of our events.

Carlow Volunteer Centre accepted the role of Charities Regulator Information Hub in 2016/2017. Whilst CVC believes in the importance of locally provided services to voluntary organisations, the poor resourcing of the Charities Regulator has impeded our efforts in providing this service.

## SUMMARY OF CARLOW VOLUNTEER CENTRE OUTPUT

### Organisational Support Work

Carlow Volunteer Centre supports organisations in a number of different ways. We offer a free placement service to organisations. Email and telephone support with the how, why and where of volunteering. Support advice and information on policy issues to Volunteer Involving organisations. Training on involving volunteers. Helping new projects with best practice information and advice when involving volunteers. Garda Vetting Service for organisations.

### Training

Carlow Volunteer Centre offers training on Volunteer Management, Workshops on Involving Volunteers and Garda Vetting. Placement officers also facilitated workshops throughout the year with Carlow Jobs Club and various schools around the county. Where groups / organisations are not in a position to attend group sessions, we offer a one to one service with clients.

### Placement Service

In 2016 Carlow Volunteer Centre successfully placed 305 new volunteers in different opportunities in Carlow. While many clients are referred on an individual basis to a wide variety of community groups and organisations, Carlow Volunteer Centre also works to support group volunteering projects as much as possible.



## NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK 2016

### Thank You Event 2016



Carlow Volunteer Centre hosted a Volunteer “Thank You” event in the Seven Oaks during National Volunteer Week. The event was sponsored by Unum. There were over 30 organisations and in excess of 200 volunteers in attendance. While guest speakers Molly Scott a young local athlete and John Lonergan retired Governor of Mountjoy spoke on the virtues of volunteering. Master of Ceremonies was Oliver McKenna of Unum.



## VOLUNTEER EXPO

Carlow Volunteer Centre hosted their 7th Volunteer Expo in the Fairgreen Shopping Centre. The Volunteer EXPO was scheduled for early September. This was an opportunity for 25 local organisations to showcase their work and explain to the public what volunteering opportunities they offer. Students from Knockbeg College, St Mary's Academy & Youthreach attended the event, while students from St. Leos College helped out on the day.

EXPO 2016 was greatly assisted given the sponsorship of Road Signage to promote the event by Unum.



## 10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Carlow Volunteer Centre  
Celebrates Our

# 10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

I.T. CARLOW VOLUNTEER FAIR  
**Wednesday October 19th 2016**  
**11am - 3pm**

*With special guest RTÉ presenter  
Miriam O' Callaghan*

 volunteer centre  
Ionad d'Oibrí Dheonacha Cheatharlach  
CARLOW

 INSTITUTE of  
TECHNOLOGY  
CARLOW  
At the Heart of South Leinster



RTE's Miriam O'Callaghan visited the Institute of Technology, Carlow in October to officially launch IT Carlow's 'Volunteer Day' & to mark the 10 Year Anniversary of Carlow Volunteer Centre.

Carlow Volunteer Centre and IT Carlow work collectively on promoting the value of volunteering. IT Carlow has rolled out the President's Award which recognises the volunteer contribution of students.

The 10-year anniversary was held in conjunction with IT Carlow's Volunteer Day. Voluntary organisations from County of Carlow will set up information stands throughout the college on 'Volunteer Day'. Students and staff alike are encouraged to chat with and join various voluntary groups on the day itself.

## BE INVOLVED PROGRAMME

The “Be Involved Programme” was developed in conjunction with St. Leos College, to incorporate volunteering into the TY timetable, allowing students to actively get involved in their community.

The programme aim is to “promote the personal, social, educational & vocational development of pupils and to prepare them for their role as autonomous, participative & responsible members of society.

The Be Involved programme is split into 2 blocks of 14 weeks. September - December and January - May. With Students Volunteering Wednesday afternoons from 2 - 4pm.



## MAKE A DIFFERENCE PROGRAMME

In 2016 Carlow Volunteer Centre, in response to the growing demand amongst Transition Year Students and Schools for volunteer placements developed a 6 week Make a Difference programme. The 6 week programme aims to enhance young people’s understanding of volunteerism, what it is and the impact that volunteering can have. The programme also helps to challenge the myths around volunteering and encourages young people to identify ways in which they can volunteer in their own community.

This programme was delivered with all Transition Year students in Presentation College and Vocational School.



## VOLUNTEER CHRISTMAS TREE



A massive Christmas tree was on display in the Fairgreen Shopping centre for December, decorated with the names of the many different organisations that support volunteering in Carlow. The names of Volunteers were displayed for the month on a pop-up stand beside the tree.

The young pupils of St Fiaccs's National School were also on hand for the Christmas Tree launch, to add a twinkle of festive cheer with a medley of Christmas songs.



## Launch of PADDY LOONEY MEMORIAL VOLUNTEER AWARD



In 2016 Carlow Volunteer Centre set about the planning for the first Paddy Looney Memorial Volunteer Award. This volunteer award came about as a result of a conversation between the Carlow Volunteer Centre Manager and a number of organisations in St. Leos College. Paddy Looney was an active volunteer in his native Graiguecullen, Carlow and beyond – as a Walking Leader with Tullow Walking Club, as Search and Rescue Volunteer with South East Mountain Rescue Assoc., Scout Leader and Orienteering Training Volunteer with TY Students. Given the range and depth of Paddy's Volunteer experience, Carlow's local Volunteer Award is named in his memory





## Roadshow 2016

Carlow Volunteer Centre participated in the first ever Community Roadshow in Carlow. During this Roadshow staff visited over 15 communities both rural and urban and a variety of settings including, Community centres, Farmers Markets, Family Resource Centres etc.

The Roadshow was a great opportunity to meet with members of the public, who we would not otherwise have had the chance to engage with.

It was also an important networking opportunity and all staff were informed about the variety of services available.



## Networking & Partnership

The flavour of activities listed within this annual report gives a strong indication of the partnership approach adopted by Carlow Volunteer Centre in the work that we do. Carlow Volunteer Centre is represented on a variety of inter-agency committees and is a strong advocate of the role that volunteers can play but also effective volunteer management.

Committees that Carlow Volunteer Centre sits on

- Carlow Public Participation Network Secretariat
- Co. Carlow Women's Network
- Carlow Citizens Information Service Board
- Carlow Integration Forum
- Carlow Age Friendly Committee
- Co. Carlow Sports Partnership

In 2016 Carlow Volunteer Centre along with the VC network became partner information hubs for the Charities Regulatory Authority. Part of this role involved liaising with local Charities and providing information and support to Charities seeking to register. Whilst such partnerships are worthwhile, they require resourcing at all levels.

Carlow Volunteer Centre plays an active role within the Volunteer Centre Network and regularly attends Placement Officers Forum, Volunteer Centre Managers Network and in 2016 participated as follows

VCMN Chairs Panel 2015/2016

POF Chairs Panel 2016

JVIVC Managers Network Executive Group



## Plans for the Future

Carlow Volunteer Centre has set itself targets for 2017 which include

- The securing of additional resources to finance a prominent and permanent office space for Carlow Volunteer Centre in Carlow town.
- The development of a Strategic Plan for Carlow Volunteer Centre.
- Compliance with the Governance Code for 2017
- Achieving Quality Standard for Volunteer Centres.

We aim to continue to provide a high quality service to members of the public and to continue to advocate at a local and national level for the voice of volunteers.

We will continue to build the capacity of Volunteer Involving Organisations through training, information and advice.

We aim to maintain our high placement rate of volunteers and intend to meet with as many volunteers face to face as possible.

We will continue to support the National Volunteer Network by participation on Networks, Support and Engagement of the Working Event Better Together Strategy and advocating for the development of National Volunteer Strategy.